

■ *Ukrainian sailors  
seek asylum in Maine.*  
Page 32

# NEW ENGLAND

News Section

Weather 36  
Late reviews 36  
Learning 37  
Lifestyle 42  
Deaths 44

THE BOSTON SUNDAY GLOBE • AUGUST 9, 1992

*'We're just a bunch of guys who like to run, who  
like the feeling of accomplishment.'*

TAIT WARDLAW, 'Round-the-Rock' race participant

## On Nantucket, athletes go distance for causes

By Jeff McLaughlin  
GLOBE STAFF

NANTUCKET — Scores of herring gulls squawked a raucous greeting to the sun as it cleared the horizon over Nantucket's Great Point yesterday morning, and a small group of men and women stood on Jetties Beach, waiting for the signal to begin their run.

No joggers these. Six of the group, all men, were about to embark on a grueling 50-mile run around the circumference of the island, barefoot and in sand, a brutal test of will and endurance. The others were the lead runners on relay teams who would run legs to help pace the six.

A little over a mile to the west, a larger group of superbly conditioned athletes stood on another beach and peered through dawn's

gossamer haze at the chilly waters of Nantucket Sound. They could only imagine the endpoint of the relay swim they were about to launch — Craigville Beach on Cape Cod, 26 meandering miles away.

There were no gold medals in the offing for any of the people on the beaches. No lucrative endorsements. No Olympic glory.

The 38 athletes who gathered on Nantucket this weekend came from all over the nation to swim and run for something far more important.

They came for life itself.

The larger group, 32-strong and including eight former US Olympians, swam in support of Swim Across America, a six-year-old campaign that has raised nearly \$500,000 for cancer research.

NANTUCKET, Page 34



GLOBE STAFF PHOTO / MARK WILSON  
With the ferry Eagle seemingly showing the way, runners begin a fund-raising circuit of Nantucket yesterday on Jetties Beach.

# Island athletes go distance for cause

## ■ NANTUCKET

Continued from Page 31

There were no famous names among the smaller group, five former Nantucket lifeguards and a former weekly newspaper reporter on the island, but their goal was similar: The fifth annual Run Around Nantucket - which they, familiarly, called the Run Around the Rock, was a benefit for the Special Needs Advisory Council of Nantucket, which helps an estimated 150 youngsters on the island to cope with a variety of challenges. Last year's run raised \$2,500.

In both cases, every cent of the money raised through pledges and contributions goes to the beneficiaries. None of the athletes received anything more than a free T-shirt.

Internationally known companies were and are the sponsors of Swim Across America, founded by Jeff Keith, 30, who lost a leg to cancer at age 12 but captured the nation's heart - and raised more than \$1 million for cancer research - in 1985 when he spent eight months running across America to show, as he said in an interview Friday, that "life doesn't come to an end when you've had cancer."

With the steadfast support of his lifelong friend Matt Vossler, Keith launched the swimming event in 1987, and such Olympic gold medalists as Rowdy Gaines, Steve Lundquist and Diana Nyad were quick to join the effort.

"The response has been incredible every year," said Keith, a 1984 Boston College graduate. "At first it was mostly people I knew personally. But now there are swimmers I know only because any swimming fan would, and they're here. I think we've got a few who have never left California before, and I can't wait 'til they hit that Sound - it sure isn't an indoor pool."

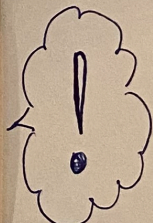
This year the swimmers included Jill Sterkel, the only female American to make four Olympic teams; 1984 gold medalist and former world record-holder Geoff Gaberino; former American Male Swimmer of the Year Craig Beardsley; and 1988 silver medalist Janel Jorgenson.

Swim Across America's goal this year was to raise well over \$100,000 for the Jimmy Fund of the Dana Farber Cancer Institute in Boston and the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City.

Mary Kennedy, Boston College Eagle of the Year in 1985 and a principal organizer for the enterprise, said, "We wanted to make it a bigger event, and we're planting the seed by moving it here [from Connecticut]. We already have a lot of support from Wall Street, and now we want to make it more regional, get New England more involved - quite a few of us have Boston College connections after all. We'll do well this year, but better yet in '93."

Meanwhile, the retail shops, small businesses and year-round and seasonal residents of Nantucket are the sponsors of the Run Around the Rock. Its inspiration comes from Jim Storey, 28, whose late father was handicapped. Storey thought of him often during his usual solitary runs on Nantucket's beaches while he was a lifeguard in the mid-'80s, and then decided to put thought into action, and action into service to children who, he knows better than most, have a lifetime of challenges ahead of them. Getting to know Kim Horyn and Kathy Wiggins, the co-chairmen of the voluntary Special Needs Advisory Council, convinced him that it was the most appropriate organization on the island.

Now in the health club management field in New York City, Storey ran alone in 1988 and '89, and then





GLOBE STAFF PHOTO / MARK WILSON

Pat Callahan begins his leg of a 26-mile relay swim yesterday from Jetties Beach on Nantucket to Craigville Beach on Cape Cod.

old lifeguarding pal Hector Macdonald joined him. Last year other friends began asking if they could "join the fun," in the words of Storey's former roommate, Clark Williams, 25, a marketing executive who flew in from Houston at his own expense to join the fun this year.

The Nantucket lifeguarding tradition was being carried on this year by US Navy Intelligence veteran and Nantucket lifeguard supervisor John Ward, 25, who'll start a career as a stockbroker in the fall; by the youngest of the six runners, 20-year-old Charles Baisley, an undergraduate at Fordham University; and by many of the 16 other runners who planned on running portions of the 50 miles in relay fashion to help pace the double-marathoners.

The runners' goal this year at first was to double last year's total of \$2,500, but with burgeoning success in securing pledges, by yesterday they thought they would be able to break the \$10,000 mark if all six finished.

Nick Judson, 27, a seasonal resident of Nantucket who'll return to work for a Newport, R.I. sailmaking firm in the fall, is both participant and leading fund-raiser for the island team. He said Friday, "I don't think there's been a business that's said no, even though many of them had a tough year with the recession. If it wasn't money or pledges, it was contributions in kind or something to raffle off. The island people have really come through."

It was a coincidence that the two groups convened on the island this weekend. This is the first year on Nantucket for Swim Across America, which in its five previous editions was a 13-mile relay from southern Connecticut across Long Island Sound to New York.

But a mutual admiration society quickly emerged, and both groups of athletes and some of their supporters got together Friday night for the traditional carbohydrate-loading meal that most endurance-testing athletes find essential.

Tait Wardlaw, 26, of Waterbury, Vt., who wrote feature stories about Storey's effort when he was a reporter for the Nantucket Beacon — he's now an editor of Ski Racing magazine — began participating in the race last year. Only a semi-serious amateur, he thought he could "bull through a 50-mile run," but was forced to drop out after 30 miles, calves knotted up, feet swollen and bleeding.

He trained hard in the hills of Vermont this year, and vowed yesterday morning to finish. But after meeting the swimmers Friday night, he said, "We're just a bunch of guys who like to run, who like the feeling of accomplishment. Those dudes are serious athletes. They're awesome."

Roberto Ayala, 27, former Boston College swim team captain and two-time member of Mexico's National Team, had a different view: "We think the runners are crazy, and they think we are. We're probably both right," he said.

Marc Surprenant, 31, a New Bedford native who lives now in Osterville on Cape Cod, is someone who can understand both challenges unusually well: He is a former US National Ultradistance Champion and a four-time finisher in the Ironman Triathlon, which combines running, swimming and cycling.

"We all love to extend ourselves, that's obvious," Surprenant said. "But it's the causes that'll have us both giving it all we have."

Jim Storey said, "When I hit that last half-mile last year, I was really hurting. But then I saw those special needs kids at the finish line, waving signs and cheering, and I didn't feel any pain. I felt like doing it again."